

# THE CLOCK IS UP:

**It is Time CDC  
Offer Clear  
Guidance for  
Americans on  
Pneumonia  
Vaccines**



National Caucus and Center on Black Aging, Inc.





# INFLUENZA/PNEUMONIA A MORTALITY RATE FOR BLACK AMERICANS WAS HIGHER THAN THE RATE FOR WHITE AMERICANS.

**Karyne Jones**

**President and CEO**

In response to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) January 27 release of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) which included guidance on the clinical use of new pneumonia vaccines, Karyne Jones, President and CEO of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aging provided the following statement:

As Americans continue to face multiple threats to their respiratory health including influenza, pneumonia and the ongoing threat of COVID-19, I am deeply disappointed that the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has failed to provide clear and broad guidance for the use of new, highly effective vaccines against pneumonia. These vaccines were approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in June of 2021 and we are just now receiving clinical guidance on their use. Unfortunately, the guidance which has been offered is incomplete and confusing for patients and providers.

We already know the disproportionate impact pneumonia has on minority communities. According to one study that examined influenza/pneumonia mortality rates across 30 U.S. cities, the influenza/pneumonia mortality rate for Black Americans was 16 percent higher than the rate for White Americans.

While we understand and appreciate the many factors the ACIP must consider in these decisions, we cannot help but ask why we are still waiting for clear guidance for preventing pneumonia. We urge the CDC to expedite any remaining evaluations and reissue clear and broad guidance as soon as possible to ensure every eligible American has access to the strongest protections possible against this deadly disease.